

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ANKARA 04786 01 OF 02 281207Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 DLOS-09 OES-07 ACDA-12
EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DOE-15 SOE-02 /117 W
-----064737 281233Z /11

O R 281045Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2437
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR
USDOCOSOUTH
USNMR SHAPE
CINCUSNAVEUR
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION USNATO
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
AMCONSUL ADANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 4786

USEEC

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PLOS, PBOR, TU, SU
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PAGE 02 ANKARA 04786 01 OF 02 281207Z

SUBJ: TURKISH-SOVIET AGREEMENT ON DEMARCATION OF BLACK SEA FLOOR

REF: ANKARA 4764 (NOTAL)

1. IN JUNE 27 CALL ON MFA SECTION CHIEFS DEALING WITH
LOS AND CONTINENTAL SHELF MATTERS, EMBOFFS ASKED ABOUT
BLACK SEA "CONTINENTAL SHELF" DELIMITATION AGREEMENT

SIGNED DURING PRIMIN ECEVIT'S RECENT VISIT TO MOSCOW.

2. ACCORDING TO MFA OFFICERS, INITIATIVE FOR DISCUSSIONS CAME FROM THE TURKS IN MAY, 1977, WITH SOVIETS AGREEING IN NOVEMBER TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS, WHICH WERE ESSENTIALLY COMPLETED BY MAY, 1978. (LOCAL MEDIA, HOWEVER, REPORTED THAT FINAL TALKS ON THE SUBJECT WERE CARRIED ON IN MOSCOW BEGINNING JUNE 15, AND ONE OF OUR MFA SOURCES HAD HIMSELF BEEN DIVERTED FROM ANOTHER TRIP IN JUNE FOR ONE-DAY STOP IN MOSCOW FOR THE DISCUSSIONS.)

3. ALTHOUGH THE AGREEMENT INVOLVES A DIVISION ALONG THE MEDIAN LINE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, MFA OFFICERS FELT IT ESTABLISHES A USEFUL PRECEDENT FOR TURKEY'S ONGOING DISPUTES WITH GREECE OVER THE AEGEAN BECAUSE OF TWO ASPECTS: (1) IT SPECIFICALLY REFERS, "FOR THE FIRST TIME", TO A DELIMITATION BASED ON PRINCIPLES OF EQUITY; AND (2) IT "SHOWS THAT SUCH QUESTIONS CAN EASILY BE RESOLVED IF THE TWO SIDES SIT DOWN TOGETHER IN THE PROPER SPIRIT AND NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY."

4. THE AGREED DIVIDING LINE IN THE BLACK SEA RUNS FROM THE RUSSIAN-TURKISH LAND BORDER TO A POINT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BLACK SEA ON THE 32ND MERIDIAN. THE TURKS HAD WANTED TO HAVE THE LINE EXTEND AS FAR AS THE 31ST MERIDIAN, BUT THE SOVIETS DID NOT WANT TO EXTEND THE
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ANKARA 04786 01 OF 02 281207Z

LINE THAT FAR FOR FEAR OF COMPLICATING THEIR SEABED NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ROMANIAN AND BULGARIANS. (COMMENT: EXTENDING LINE TO 31ST MERIDIAN WOULD HAVE GIVEN TURKS AN ADVANTAGE IN THEIR TALKS WITH BULGARIANS AND ROMANIANS.) AGREED-ON LINE IS ABOUT 800 KM LONG VERSUS UNDEMARCATED LENGTH OF "ABOUT 50 KM," WHICH "SHOULD BE EASY TO AGREE ON" ONCE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN COMPLETED.

5. MFA OFFICER NOTED THAT DEMARCATION OF SEABED BETWEEN TURKEY AND SOVIET UNION WAS RELATIVELY EASY BECAUSE SHORE ON BOTH SIDES SLOPES STEEPLY AND TRUE SHELF IS FAIRLY NARROW; HE PREDICTED MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR THE SOVIETS IN COMING TO AGREEMENT WITH THE ROMANIANS BECAUSE THE SHELF TO BE DIVIDED BETWEEN THEM IS WIDE, SHALLOW, AND LIKELY TO CONTAIN SIGNIFICANT PETROLEUM. TURKISH SEABED BOUNDARY WITH ROMANIA IS INSIGNIFICANT AND CAN EASILY BE SETTLED ONCE ROMANIA HAS SETTLED WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT THERE HAS BEEN

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 04786 02 OF 02 281214Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ANKARA 4786

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"A SLIGHT PROBLEM" BETWEEN TURKEY AND BULGARIA FOR
"THE LAST THREE OR FOUR YEARS" OVER THE EXACT POINT
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ANKARA 04786 02 OF 02 281214Z

FROM WHICH THEIR SEABED BOUNDARY SHOULD BEGIN, DUE TO
SHIFTING OF THE REZVAYA RIVER, WHICH FORMS THE LAND BOUNDARY;

ONCE THIS IS SETTLED, MFA OFFICER SAID, THE SEABED DIVIDING LINE SHOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT TO AGREE UPON. (COMMENT: THIS OPTIMISM NOTWITHSTANDING, RELATIVE WIDENESS OF SHELF AT TURCO-BULGARIAN BOUNDARY, PLUS BULGARIA'S BASIC GEOGRAPHIC DISADVANTAGE, COULD WELL PRODUCE TOUGH AND PROTRACTED NEGOTIATIONS.)

6. MFA OFFICERS NOTED THAT OF RECENTLY DISCOVERED URANIUM-BEARING SEDIMENT DEPOSIT IN THE BLACK SEA, THE GREAT BULK APPEAR TO BE ON THE TURKISH SIDE OF THE NEW DIVIDING LINE BUT ARE NOT REPEAT NOT EXPLOITABLE WITH PRESENT TECHNOLOGY.

7. MFA OFFICERS CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT TALKS WITH THE SOVIETS ARE CONTINUING FOR A NEW FIR (FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION) AGREEMENT FOR THE BLACK SEA, BUT GAVE NO DETAILS. MFA OFFICER SAID REPORTS OF PLANS FOR AGREEMENTS ON BLACK SEA TRAFFIC CONTROL WERE INCORRECT AND POSSIBLY BASED ON TWO ROMANIAN-ORIGINATED POLLUTION CONTROL PROPOSALS. ONE OF THESE PROPOSALS, FOR COOPERATION BY THE FOUR BLACK SEA NATIONS ON POLLUTION CONTROL, "SHOULD NOT PRESENT ANY PROBLEM ONCE ALL THE DELIMITATIONS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED" (IE, WILL NOT COME ABOUT IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS). IN ANY CASE, "THE RUSSIANS ARE AHEAD OF US" IN POLLUTION CONTROL, AND, GIVEN PREVAILING WINDS AND CURRENTS, "IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR TURKEY TO POLLUTE THE RUSSIAN SIDE." THE OTHER ROMANIAN PROPOSAL, REGARDING CURRENTS IN THE TURKISH STRAITS AND THEIR EFFECT ON MOVEMENT OF POLLUTION IN THE BLACK SEA, HAS BEEN FLATLY TURNED DOWN BY THE TURKS.

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PAGE 03 ANKARA 04786 02 OF 02 281214Z

8. MFA OFFICER SAID THAT SOVIETS HAD "CORDIALLY" PROPOSED TECHNICAL AID TO THE TURKS FOR NAVIGATION AND THE TURKS HAD "CORDIALLY" TURNED IT DOWN, SAYING THEY ALREADY HAD THEIR OWN TECHNICIANS AND THAT IF ANY ASSISTANCE WERE NEEDED, IT WOULD INVOLVE RUSSIAN ACQUIESCENCE (OPTIONAL UNDER THE MONTREUX CONVENTION) TO TAKING TURKISH PILOTS ON THEIR SHIPS WHEN TRANSITING THE STRAITS. SPIERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TERRITORIAL WATERS, AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ANKARA04786
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780267-0474
Format: TEL
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780614/aaaaaljm.tel
Line Count: 216
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3b5ee57e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ANKARA 4764
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2185600
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TURKISH-SOVIET AGREEMENT ON DEMARCATION OF BLACK SEA FLOOR
TAGS: PLOS, PBOR, TU, SU
To: STATE USEEC
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3b5ee57e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014